

CHAPTER 11.

WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?

Goals, policies and strategies articulate how Floyd County will meet its challenges and opportunities and be the “*creative, prosperous, and resilient community that respects its people and protects its farms, forests and water for future generations.*”

A goal is a brief statement of desired results. A policy is a statement of direction to accomplish the goal/s. A strategy is a specific action or regulation that implements policy and helps achieve a goal. Note that the County may only utilize policies and strategies that are expressly allowed by the Code of Virginia. A summary of tools available to implement the Comprehensive Plan can be found in Appendix D.

GOAL 1 FARMS AND FORESTS ARE VALUED AND PROTECTED.

Policy 1:1 Farms and forests must be given priority attention in the short-term to protect them as resources in the long-term.

Policy 1:2 Recognize that the dividing of important agricultural tracts into residential parcels forever diminishes the likelihood that substantive farming will occur there in the future. Further, the encroachment on surrounding farmlands increases the likelihood of legal challenges from residences related to farm noises, smells and other practices. Also, after a certain point, the critical mass of beef/dairy farms may be lost so that the farming infrastructure (haulers, stores, cooperatives, etc.) is not viable. It is important to protect farmland through County policy.

Policy 1:3 Identify and recognize areas that are ideal for different uses, especially agriculture and forests, residential development and commercial and light industry.

Policy 1:4 Areas designated as ideal for agriculture and forests should generally be protected through County policy. More specific volunteer protections are also allowed for those areas, such as conservation easements and agricultural and forestal districts, if they are not in designated growth areas. Some exceptions

may be allowed in designated growth areas if the property or area is exceptional, but these conservations easements and agricultural or forestall districts shall not prevent construction of public utilities to growth areas.

- Policy 1:5** Within those areas considered well-suited for residential and commercial/light industry development, the County will work with the Public Service Authority to identify areas where central water and sewer may be established most readily, to direct growth to those areas and away from agricultural and forest lands (and avoid incompatible uses and encroachment.)
- Policy 1:6** Recognize that areas most removed from public services (schools, public safety, solid waste) are the most expensive to serve and further development there should be discouraged.
- Policy 1:7** Collaborate with public and private agencies to support agricultural and forestal viability through programs, such as local value-added processing and expanding local and regional markets for local foods.
- Policy 1:8** Encourage and support farms in obtaining BQA (Beef Quality Assurance) and GAP (Good Agricultural Practice) certifications.
- Policy 1:9** Recognize and support agriculture as a way of life by keeping agriculture in the school curriculum and coordinating with Virginia Cooperative Extension and by encouraging farm mentoring work.
- Policy 1:10** Protect and promote private and community gardens, including greenhouses to extend seasons.
- Policy 1:11** Recognize the natural and economic value of maintaining unfragmented forests (greater than 40 acres.) Forests help recharge groundwater and provide forestry jobs.
- Policy 1:12** Best management practices and plans are encouraged for farms and forests.
- Policy 1:13** Encourage volunteer efforts to expand access to healthy foods for needy families and seniors.
- Policy 1:14** Tap diverse local expertise and interests by establishing tasks forces, such as one to make specific recommendations on land policies (work in conjunction with the Planning Commission) and one to development an agricultural

strategic plan, including a local food assessment, to help economic viability of farming.

Policy 1:15 It is important that families be able to pass land down to immediate family members, but the giving and receiving family members must attest that they are not circumventing the Subdivision Ordinance. Furthermore, a minimum time of ownership should be established.

GOAL 2 WATER IS BETTER UNDERSTOOD, VALUED, AND PROTECTED.

Policy 2:1 Recognize that the County’s residents are dependent on groundwater supplies and that these supplies are limited and vulnerable to drought and contamination.

Policy 2:2 Establish a mechanism that will prevent development from over-burdening groundwater supplies while respecting property rights.

Policy 2:3 Within those areas considered well-suited for residential and commercial/light industry development (but not agriculture), work with the Public Service Authority to identify where central water and sewer may be established most readily. Establish areas designated for non-agricultural growth and development when central water and sewer may be provided and direct growth to those areas and away from agricultural and forest lands, to avoid incompatible uses and encroachment. It is important to protect farmland and forests through County policy.

Policy 2:4 Recognize the natural and economic value of maintaining unfragmented forests (greater than 40 acres.) Forests help recharge groundwater and provide forestry jobs.

Policy 2:5 Recognize the value of wetlands and erosion control in replenishing groundwater.

Policy 2:6 Encourage best practices in development that will help retain more water.

Policy 2:6 Encourage proper use and care of private septic systems and any storage tanks.

Policy 2:7 Collaborate with public and private agencies to study groundwater or improve surface water quality through voluntary programs.

Policy 2:8 Encourage the Health Department and other regional stakeholders to add “yield” to the fields tracked in the well database as a means to better understand water resources and aid future planning.

Policy 2:9 **Natural areas, such as wetlands, that are** critical to groundwater recharge, and should be identified and generally protected through County policy. More specific volunteer protections are also allowed, such as conservation easements, if they are not in designated growth areas. Some exceptions may be allowed in designated growth areas if the property is exceptional, but these conservations easements and agricultural or forestall districts shall not prevent construction of public utilities to growth areas.

GOAL 3 THE LOCAL ECONOMY IS DIVERSIFIED AND EXPANDED, WITH MORE GOOD-PAYING JOBS AND GROWING SMALL BUSINESSES.

Policy 3:1 The number of jobs within the County needs to increase, especially the number of jobs providing living wages and benefits.

Policy 3:2 A larger, more diverse tax base is needed to support basic service needs; appropriate commercial and light industry are an important source of tax revenue.

Policy 3:3 The County encourages good technology and innovation firms to grow or develop in the County.

Policy 3:4 Staff will share available information about grants and programs with local businesses seeking to expand or preserve jobs, and staff may assist with viable public grant and loan opportunities.

Policy 3:5 Citizens and governmental departments are encouraged to buy goods and services locally whenever practical to support the local economy.

Policy 3:6 Affordable building space is needed for small businesses and should be encouraged.

- Policy 3:7** Staff will collaborate with public and private agencies to provide training to small businesses and for workforce development to enable business and wage growth.
- Policy 3:8** To better understand and support local businesses, an inventory is needed of businesses in the County.
- Policy 3:9** Agriculture is an essential part of the local economy, and expanding agriculture and value-added processing is important and will be encouraged.
- Policy 3:10** Tourism is an important part of the local economy. Assets and products of Floyd County will be promoted to visitors and targeted potential visitors.
- Policy 3:11** Utilize and support economic development programs for the arts and crafts community, including the Jacksonville Center, The Crooked Road, and Round the Mountain.
- Policy 3:12** Creativity and the arts are a special strength in Floyd County, and they will be promoted and recognized, such as through public art.
- Policy 3:13** The robust telecommunications infrastructure affords many telecommuting opportunities for citizens in various service fields; these opportunities should be promoted as a way to increase job and training opportunities.
- Policy 3:14** The County will support the Economic Development Authority of Floyd County as it seeks to expand private investment and increase the quantity and quality of jobs in the County.

GOAL 4 GOOD EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR ALL.

- Policy 4:1** Children in Floyd County will have access to high quality k-12 education.
- Policy 4:2** School buildings and equipment will be well-maintained for health and safety.
- Policy 4:3** The County will encourage abundant access to education and training for local residents and businesses.
- Policy 4:4** Support the local library as a focal point for lifelong learning.

Policy 4:5 Seek to develop an expanded physical presence of New River Community College in the County.

GOAL 5 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES OF FIRE PROTECTION, EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORT, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE AVAILABLE TO ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS.

Policy 5:1 Provide operations and capital funding necessary for the essential functions of fire protection, emergency medical transport, and law enforcement.

Policy 5:2 Encourage collaboration and coordination among agencies.

Policy 5:3 Seek to expand substance abuse prevention programs in the County.

GOAL 6 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE COUNTY.

Policy 6:1 Floyd County residents should have fair access to all federally and state-funded programs.

Policy 6:2 Health and human service agencies serving the County are encouraged to coordinate and collaborate to create a real or virtual one-stop-shop.

Policy 6:3 When services are not available inside the community, the County will advocate for transportation to be made available to residents to access those services.

Policy 6:4 The (private) development of a community center with indoor pool and other multi-purpose community space is encouraged.

Policy 6:5 Recreation opportunities are important for all ages.

GOAL 7 SAFE, AFFORDABLE AND ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOUSING FOR ALL INCOME LEVELS IS AVAILABLE IN FLOYD COUNTY.

Policy 7:1 It is important that families that work in Floyd County be able to live in Floyd County.

- Policy 7:2** Floyd County residents should receive their fair-share of regional weatherization funds, which provide for energy-efficiency improvements.
- Policy 7:3** Encourage rehabilitation of older unsafe or unsanitary residential units.
- Policy 7:4** Encourage safe and attractive manufactured home parks.
- Policy 7:5** Encourage the study of a Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Program to provide new housing for moderate to low-income citizens.
- Policy 7:6** Encourage expansion of public water (including additional public wells) and sewer to enable more housing to be near essential services.
- Policy 7:7** Encourage homeowners to educate themselves regarding maintenance of private sewer systems.
- Policy 7:8** Encourage private and public development of ample housing that meets the “continuum of care” for seniors, including patio homes, assisted living, and retirement homes.
- Policy 7:9** New housing developments should not result in increased burdens on current tax payers.
- Policy 7:10** Guide growth to existing parcels.
- Policy 7:11** Homeowners are encouraged to pursue safe, efficient alternative energy sources, such as wind and solar.
- GOAL 8 PROVIDE AN EFFICIENT SOLID WASTE COLLECTION SYSTEM, INCLUDING RECYCLING.**
- Policy 8:1** Continuously improve the efficiency of solid waste collection.
- Policy 8:2** Analyze the creation of solid waste convenience centers to replace the large number of greenbox locations.
- Policy 8:3** Encourage re-use and recycling for individuals, non-profits, businesses, and government.

- Policy 8:4** Regularly seek better markets for recyclables.
- Policy 8:5** Encourage participation in litter clean-up, like the annual clean-up days.
- Policy 8:6** Encourage participation in collection days for hazardous household materials.

GOAL 9 RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ENJOY EFFICIENT, CAPABLE AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE.

- Policy 9:1** Support regulatory requirements that are fair, predictable and effective at protecting the interests of private property owners and the community as a whole.
- Policy 9:2** Through planning and local policies, manage growth and its fiscal impacts.
- Policy 9:3** Improve public relations and transparency with citizens.
- Policy 9:4** Participate with regional efforts when they support County goals.
- Policy 9:5** Support coordination amongst public and private entities to achieve common goals.
- Policy 9:6** Support the role of County Administration and its staffing requirement: to assist departments and the Board in meeting goals; serve as a key link between the Board, the staff and the public; coordinate the work of county departments and officers; implement strategic financial planning in the areas of budget and capital improvements; and provide timely financial data and recommendations.
- Policy 9:7** Maintain information technology equipment capable of supporting the efficient and effective delivery of services.
- Policy 9:8** Consideration will be given to a new County seal or logo that reflects strategic direction.

GOAL 10 RESIDENTS ENJOY EFFICIENTLY-PROVIDED FACILITIES AND FAIRLY-FUNDED SERVICES.

Policy 10:1 Assure that the costs of facilities to serve new residents is not shifted to current residents.

Policy 10:2 Central water and sewer is available in areas designated for growth.

Policy 10:3 Adequate roads and other services are available in areas designated for growth.

Policy 10:4 Maintain adequate levels of service for county facilities and services, operations and maintenance; law enforcement; fire protection; emergency medical transport; solid waste management; and others through operating and capital expenditures.

GOAL 11 SAFE AND CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION ROUTES AND MODES ARE AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND VISITORS.

Policy 11:1 The Commonwealth of Virginia must be held accountable in providing adequate road maintenance for the safety of all.

Policy 11:2 Non-family subdivisions are not well-suited to un-paved roads.

Policy 11:3 Pedestrian pathways are difficult to achieve in the County due to lack of maintenance resources, lack of existing easements, and limited public lands under local control, but where resources are available to develop and implement pathways, they will be allowed and encouraged.

Also see specific policies and projects in the Transportation portion of the Plan.

GOAL 12 RESIDENTS ENJOY THE RURAL CHARACTER AND A SENSE OF COMMUNITY THAT HONORS THE PAST AND FORGES THE FUTURE.

Policy 12:1 Preservation of history and culture is important and encouraged.

Policy 12:2 Volunteerism is important to this community's well-being and is encouraged.

Policy 12:3 Encourage potential and new residents to understand what it is really like to live in a rural place and be part of the fabric; that as citizens we are givers and stewards.

Policy 12:4 The County should have a logo consistent with its goals.

Chapter 11.

What are Our Goals?

Summary and Conclusion

Goals, policies and strategies articulate how Floyd County will meet its challenges and opportunities. The goals--brief statements of desired results--are:

1. Farms and Forests are valued and protected.
2. Water is valued and protected.
3. The local economy is diversified and expanded, including more good-paying jobs and small business opportunities.
4. Good educational and training opportunities are available for all.
5. Essential public services of fire protection, emergency medical transport, and law enforcement are available to all County residents.
6. Health and human services are available in the County.
7. Safe, affordable and energy-efficient housing for all income levels is available in Floyd County.
8. The County has efficient solid waste collections, including recycling.
9. Residents and businesses enjoy efficient, capable and responsive governance.
10. Residents enjoy efficiently-provided facilities and fairly-funded services.
11. Safe and convenient transportation routes and modes are available to residents, businesses and visitors.
12. Residents enjoy the rural character and a sense of community that honors the past and forges the future.

For these goals to be realized, implementation measures are essential.

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